



4/29/46

7:40 - 7:40

S H O C H I K U

" Benten Musume Meo no Shiranami "

(Bentenkozo, Burglar disguised as a girl)

Written by Mokuami Kawatake

To be presented by Kikugoro, Kichiemon,
and Sojuroh with their troupes, from May 5th
to May 31st, 1946:-

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First Scene: Dry goods store, Hamamatsuya.

In the middle of the stage a long navy-blue shop curtain with the crest of Hamamatsuya is hanging and on the right side there is a room furnished with paper sliding-doors, a closet, the counter, and chests of drawers with various dry goods. A playcard of "Be aware of pickpocket" is seen on the transom. On the left side there is another room. Three shopmen, Tasuke, Sashichi and Inosuke are sitting before three customers, Nagakichi, a fireman is standing at the shop front having a smoke and the clerk Yokuroh is sitting before the counter. The curtain rises.

SHOCHIKU

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"BENTEN-MUSUME-NEO-NO-SHIRANAMI"

(Benten-Kozo, Burglar Disguised as a Girl.)

Written by KAWATAKE MOKUAMI.

To be presented by Kikugoro with his troupe at
Tokyo Theatre May, 1946.

SYNOPSIS.

A young burglar called Bentenkozo committed one crime after another, utilizing his good looks and disguising himself as a beautiful young girl. He was under the command of the famous burglar Nihon-Daemon together with other three rascals.

One day the gang violated into the drapery Hamamatsuya, and Bentenkozo came to know from the master's mouth that he was his only child who had been missing ever since he was twelve years old. But, much to the draper's distress, constables came to arrest ^{the gang} them and Benten-Kozo committed harakiri at the temple gate of the Gokurakuji.

Tasuke: I am sorry to have kept you waiting so long.
It comes in all to seventeen yen and fifty
sen. Here is your change two yen and a half.

Customer A: Thank you very much. Good-bye.

" B: Say, I am in a hurry; be quick please.

Shopman Sashichi: Certainly, sir.

(Thereupon Sanji appears in dishabille)

Sanji: Good afternoon.

Inosuke: Good afternoon, sir

Sanji: Have you not yet dyed the five wadded silk
garments I ordered the other day?

Sashichi: Well we have done, but sorry to say we have not
finished to tailor them.

Sanji: What! Not yet? How many times must I come?

Sashichi: I am sorry. As the weather has been bad we
could not finish dying as prearranged. But
they will surely be completed by this evening
at the latest.

Tasuke: Well. A little while ago the tailor came and
said he would bring them by seven O'clock.

Inosuke: It is as your hear. Please wait till this
evening.

Sanji: Well I may wait, but remember I have paid in
advance lest it should be so late.

Inosuke: I see. Will you please wait till evening?

Tasuke: Please tell me your address. We may have them
sent to your house.

No, you need not send them to me.

Sashichi: Then Won't you be waiting till evening over,

drinking sake (rice wine) upstairs?

Sanji: Thank ~~y~~ you, but I never want to drink that
iron-smelling sake served by the scald-
headed ~~boy~~.

Shop-boy: Oh, it's bad. Have you forgotten that you
were quite intoxicated the other day?

Tasuke: Shut up!

Sanji: Then, I will come in the evening.

Sashichi: Well, we shall be waiting for you.

Sanji: Now I will drink at a public-house. Good-bye.
(exits towards the left side.)

Fireman: Mr. Sashichi! What is that man?

Sashichi: I don't know, but he ordered gay garments,
saying that he would wear them on a festival.

Fireman: Judging from his appearance and words, he
must be a gambler. But he is restless and
his eyes are not pleasant. Now I will drink
that iron-smelling sake. (gets into the inner
room)

(Thereupon Nippon Saemon appears on the stage
wearing two swords long and short accompanied
by a lackey.)

Saemon: Sakuhei! That shop is Hamamatsuya, isn't it?

Sakuhei: Yes, it is. They opened the shop only few
years ago, but it seems very prosperous.

Zaemon: Oh, I see.

Sakuhei: Do you buy some goods at that shop?

Zaemon: Well, they may have something uncommon.

Sakuhei: Then I will introduce you.

(They approach the shop)

Good afternoon!

Yokuroh: Well, you are welcome. This way please.

Zaemon: I will take the liberty. (They get into the shop and the shop-boy serves them with tea)

Yokuroh: It is very fine today, isn't it?

Zaemon: Well, it is very mild. (to Sakuhei) Sakuhei!
You might come later.

Sakuhei: Then I will just go out.

(The lackey exits towards the left side)

Yokuroh: What articles do you want?

Zaemon: Show me some excellent soft goods. I intend to use them as a gift to Hojoh Family.

Yokuroh: Certainly, sir. Mr. Tasuke! Will you please bring some gold damask silk from the inner room?

Tasuke: Certainly sir. (enters the inner room)

Zaemon: Your shop is very prosperous indeed!

Yokuroh: Thanks to our customers' favour, the business is coming on well.

(Thereupon master Kohbeh appears accompanied by Tasuke.)

Kohbeh: Welcome, sir.

Zaemon: And who are you?

Kohbeh: I am the master of this shop. Thank you very much for your continued favour.

Zaemon: I have dropped in your shop expecting to find something uncommon. For your shop is very popular among us.

- Kohbeh: Thank you very much.
- Yokuroh: Then I shall show the articles you ordered.
- Tasuke: As ill luck would have it, they are now out of stock.
- Kohbeh: But they are not uncommon. Fortunately as we have some excellent articles just arrived from Kyoto, let me show them to you.
- Zaemon: Well. As they are articles specially made to order, they must be considerably dear. But I don't mind however much they may cost. I wish to get uncommon ones.
- Kohbeh: It will take sometime, so will you please be waiting in the inner room? I will offer you a cup of tea.
- Zaemon: Well, then I will take the liberty and wait over there.
- Kohbeh: Come this way, please.
(The two enter the inner room.)
- Yokuroh: By the way, we are not visited by any good customer today.
- Sashichi: The customer who visited me a little while ago took only fifty or sixty sen worth of goods and drank as many as five or six cups of tea.
- Yokuroh: A woman visited me yesterday carrying a baby on her back. I served her with some candies. Then she wrapped them up in paper and went back without buying anything.
- The three shopmen: Oh, it was bad.

Yokuroh: I wish a beautiful lady would come.
(Thereupon Benten-kozo disguised as a beautiful girl appears accompanied by Rikimaru Nangoh.)

Benten: Say, Yosohachi! Where is Hamamatsuya?
Nangoh: It is that dry goods store we see over there.
Benten: Never tell them about my bridal outfit.
Nangoh: I think it matters little.
Benten: But I feel rather shy.
Nangoh: Then I will not tell anything about it.
(They reach the stage.)

Nangoh: Now please enter the shop, Miss.
Benten: You had better go in first.
Nangoh: Then excuse me.

Sashichi: Oh, you are welcome!
Tasuke:
Sashichi: Oh, Miss, come here please.
Inosuke:
Tasuke: Oh-M No, will you please come to me?

The three: Please come to me.
(The three shopmen compete with one another.)

Yokuroh: Order! I tell you. (to Benten) This way please.

The shopment Please come here.

Nangoh: Be calm!
(Benten and Nangoh step in and sit down.)

Yokuroh: Now, it is very fine today.
(The shop-boy offers them tea.)

Yokuroh: What shall I show you?
Nangoh: Will you please show us long-sleeved garments, woolen stuff ofr obi, and silk crapes for under-wears.

Yokuroh: Certainly, sir. Say, boy, bring woolen brocades, beautiful long-sleeved garments etc.

Boy: Certainly, sir. (enters the inner room)

Yokuroh: Wait a moment, please. By the way, are you fond of theatre-going?

Benten: Yes, I am extremely fond of it.
(The shop-boy appears with the articles.)

Yokuroh: I am sorry to have kept you waiting. Bring a light, boy!

Boy: Certainly. (brings a candle-stand)

Benten: Yosohachi! Which shall I take of these scarlet silk crapes?

Nangoh: I leave that to you.

Benten: Then I will take this one.

Nangoh: Well, it will be suited for your bridal outfit.

Yokuroh: Oh, your marriage outfit?

Benten: (to Nangoh) Why did you reveal it for all my warning?

Nangoh: I am sorry to have blurted out the truth.
(Yokuroh is looking at Benten fascinated with his beautiful figure. Benten-here secretly takes out a scarlet silk crape and mingled it among the articles of the shop. Then he again takes it and puts it in his pocket. Yokuroh glances at it and whispers something to appears again with the fireman.)

Fireman: Who stole from the shop?

Inosuke: Be ~~qu~~ silent!

Nangoh: I will take this long-sleeved garment these woolen stuff for "Obi" and this scarlet silk crape. Now we are going to visit the shrine of Hachiman, so I wish you will have counted how much it will be altogether by the time when we drop in the shop on our way home later.

Sashichi: Certainly, sir.

Nangoh: Now we must go before night falls.

Benten: Well.

Nangoh: Good-bye. (Nangoh and Benten are about to leave when Yokuroh keeps them back.)

Yokuroh: Wait a moment, please.

Nangoh: Have you anything to do with me?

Yokuroh: Don't make a joke, please.

Nangoh: What!

Yokuroh: Whow me what you have concealed in your pocket.

The two: Eh! (pretend to get surprised.)

Fireman: Oh, I was surprised that such a beautiful girl should have stolen from the shop!

Tasuke: We must not be off our guard indeed!

Nangoh: What! Do you want to say that Miss has stolen something? Be careful about what you say or you will be sorry for it.

(Benten clings to Nangoh and is trembling.)

Yokuroh: In my line of business, I am not mistaken.

Sashichi: If you insist upon being innocent, we must examine by unclothing you.

Now you had better show it quickly.

Fireman: You shall not escape now. Acknowledge your fault quickly.

Benten: What shall I do, Yosohachi?

Nangoh: Never mind! What impudent fellows they are that they should treat you as a pickpocket. We cannot leave the shop without vindicating our innocence.

Yokuroh: What! You will vindicate your innocence? What a brazen-faced fellow!

Nangoh: Now, for what reason do you treat Miss as a pickpocket?

(Yokuroh seizes Benten and draws out the silk crape from his pocket.)

Yokuroh: From where did you bring this crape?

Fireman: By way of punishment these fellow shall be beaten.

Sashichi: Bravo!

(All gather about the two and Yokuroh stripes Benten with an abacus. Benten gets injured upon the forehead. Thereupon Kohbeh's son Sohnosuke appears and stops them.)

Sohnosuke: Oh! What has happened? Don't make a fuss.

Yokuroh: No, young master! Don't mind. They are pickpockets.

Sohnosuke: Eh! Pickpockets? And what have they stolen?

Sashichi: This beautiful miss.

Tasuke: Has stolen this silk crape.

Fireman: So you mean that crape?

Yokuroh: Of course!

Nangoh: We are innocent. I bought it at Yamagataya.
You must well examine it!

Yokuroh: Well, I will.

(Examines the crape and surprised recognizing
the mark of Yamagataya.)

Yokuroh: Oh! This is the mark of Yamagataya.

Sashichi: Then they are far from pickpockets.

Tasuke: This is an article of another shop. I'm
blessed!

All: Well!

(Nangoh takes out the receipt of Yamagataya.)

Nangoh: Clerk! See this receipt.

Yokuroh: Eh!

Nangoh: You will see by this receipt that we bought
the crape at Yamagataya. Can you treat us as
pickpockets nevertheless?

Yokuroh: Well.

Nangoh: You can never!

(all realize their fault. Sohnosuke approaches
Nangoh.)

Sohnosuke: I am the master's son. I am sorry these shop-
men used violence towards you on account of
misunderstanding. For goodness' sake, pardon
them please.

All: Forgive us, please.

Nangoh: It is no use for you to make an excuse now.
You disgraced us by calling us pickpockets.

Sohnosuke: I am sorry. But please pardon us for mercy's
sake.

Nangoh: Shut up!

Sohnosuke: W --- well.

Nangoh: Now you shall know. The miss is the daughter of Mr. Mondo Hayase, one of the first rank retainers of the lord Nikaidoh. She is to marry a principal retainer of Daimyo. Your such insult is never pardonable!

All: W --- well. We don't know how to excuse.

Nangoh: You can't settle the matter. We must meet the master. Call him quickly!

(Thereupon the master Kohbeh appears.)

Nangoh: Are you the master of the shop?

Kohbeh: Yes, I am. I have heard all the circumstances. Sorry to say, I don't know what excuse to make. I will do anything you want, so please pardon us.

Nangoh: To save your face, I am inclined to forgive you. But now I cannot, for she has been injured. See her forehead!

(raises up Benten who is sobbing lying the face downwards.)

Yokuroh: Oh, I am sorry to have injured miss.

all: Oh!

Nangoh: As I said just now, she is now in engagement. I cannot be attendance on injured miss to the house. Sorry to say, I will kill all of you and will commit harakiri as an excuse.

Benten: Say, Yosohachi! Don't bring the matter to public notice. Is there any measure to settle it privately?

Nangoh: There may be some, but how could I excuse to your father in case when it is brought to light later?

(The fireman whispers something to Kohbeh's ear and Kohbeh reckons.)

Fireman: Listen to me please.

Nangoh: What do you want?

Fireman: Sorry to say we have used violence towards you. But it would be no use killing such good-for-nothing men like us. Will you please hush up the matter as miss said? We may make many thanks.

Nangoh: What shall I do, Miss?

Benten: Do not go too far.

Nangoh: Then I will pardon them.

Fireman: Thank you very much. (approaches Kohbeh)
Please give them ten yen.

Sohnosuke: Well. (takes out the purse and hands the money to the fireman)

Fireman: Then please accept this money though not a large amount.

(Nangoh receives the money and examine it)

Nangoh: What! Is this your many thanks?

Fireman: Are you discontented with it?

Nangoh: Remember, it is the matter of life and death to me in case when my master knows about it.

Fireman: Well, I see, so I have given you ten yen.
If you are displeased return it to me!

Nangoh: Of course I will. I could never risk my life for only ten or twenty yen.

Fireman: Well. Then you may cut me first if you want!
I am never fearful of a samurai like you!

Nangoh: Well, you shall be cut!
(Nangoh is about to fight against the fireman.
Sashichi stops the fireman)

Sashichi: Don't accept his challenge.

Inosuke: Let's go over there. (The fireman and the
shopman enter the inner room)

Nangoh: I cannot bear such an insult any longer.
Now I can never return without disposing of
them.
(Looks hard towards them)

Kohbeh: Wait a moment, please! You may well be displeased
with such a small amount of money. (gives
him one hundred yen.) Please reconsider.

Nangoh: (smiles satisfactorily) Well. Detestable
fellow as he is, I may pardon him to save
your face.

Kohbeh: Then do you pardon us?

Nangoh: Yes.

Kohbeh: Now I feel relieved.

Nangoh: It took us much time on account such an un-
expected matter.

Benten: But the matter has been settled.

Nangoh: Now we must go as soon as possible.

Kohbeh: Excuse me.

Nangoh: Good-bye. (Nangoh and Banten are about to
leave the shop. Thereupon Zaemon comes in)

Zaemon: Hullo, samurai, wait a moment please.
(The two look surprised)

Nangoh: Well. Have you anything to do with me?

Saemon: Yes.

Nangoh: And what is your business?

Saemon: Well. I have heard all the circumstances.
You have well reconsidered. Forbearance is
the first consideration.

Nangoh: Well, I have pardoned them as I am accompanied
with a lady.

Saemon: Well, it was good for your master. By the way
she is the daughter of a retainer of lord Nikai-
doh isn't she?

Nangoh: Yes, she is the daughter of Mondo Hayase.

Saemon: Really?

Nangoh: Why do you ask so persistently?

Saemon: You are telling a lie.

Nangoh: What do you say?

Saemon: I am one of lord Nikaidoh's stewards. And my
name is Hayato Tamashima.

The two: Eh!

Saemon: I have never heard the name of Mondo Hayase.

Nangoh: Well.

Saemon: And this daughter of whom you said that she were
in engagement, must in fact be a man.

Benten: Oh! On what ground do you take me for a man?

Saemon: You have well been disguised as a girl. But, now
I have perceived your true colour, for I glanced
at the tatoo marks on your left arm. You are a
man aren't you?

Benten: Well.

Saemon: If you insist that you are a woman, you shall

be examined your breast.

Benten: Well.

Saemon: Now how do you answer? You swindler!

(Benten abides by the inevitable and takes /
off his coat.)

Benten: Say, Nangoh! Now it cannot be helped I must show
the cloven hoof.

Nangoh: Confound it!

(takes off his trousers and throws the swords
away)

Benten: Hang it! Now I have been perceived my true colours,
it is useless to be in a constrained manner.

Excuse me, everybody.

(puts the tobacco-tray aside with the foot, and
suddenly sits down cross-legged to their astonish-
ment.)

Yokuroh: Now I see, he was a swindler.

All: Oh!

Benten: As you know now, I have come to this shop for
the purpose of extorting money; for I got penni-
less having lost the game at an gambling-place.
For this purpose I disguised as a girl, but now
I have been perceived, it cannot be helped.
It is only a laughing-stock.

Yokuroh: Well, I took him for a true girl. What a
impudent fellow he is!

All: Yes, indeed!

Saemon: Though you have shown your true colours, you don't turn a hair. Judging from your bold manner you must be a famous burglar, I suppose.

Benten: Then don't you know yet who we are?

Yokuroh: I don't ~~you~~ know. Where have you come from?

Benten: Then you shall know what I am and where I have come from. I was born in Shichirigahama village, famous for the ode left by Goemon, that well-known burglar. Formerly I had served an apprenticeship at Enoshima island. First I would often steal small money from the offertory chest of shrines, while I was expelled from my master's house because of my having stolen master's money. Then I came to lead a wandering life doing wicked things here and there. At last the police set its eyes upon me and I was driven from the island as a branded burglar. Then I came to Yedo after having wandered about various villages and towns. In Yedo I joined a gang of robbers and have been leading a life as a black-mailer and swindler. Benten-kozo Kikunosuke is my name.

(strips himself to the waist and makes a show.)

Nangoh: And I am his comrade named Rikimaru Nangoh, I was born in Odawara as a son of a fisherman.

From my childhood I passed my daily life making a companion of high sea and I used to join gambling in main ships. I would often steal money belonged to gamblers and made causes of quarrels at the risk of my life, during which time I have got iron nerves. In the meantime I committed a crime and was put into prison, but later I escaped from prison and came to Yedo where I became acquainted with Benten-Kozo. My name is Rikimari Nangoh: Look well at my face and remember me.

Saemon: Now I see. You are fellow conspirators of the famous five robbers, aren't you?

Benten: Yes I am. Those five robbers are Saemon Nippon, Rikimaru Nangoh, Rihei Tadanobu, Juza Akaboshi and I.

Nangoh: ~~Now I am a conspirator of the famous five robbers~~
Now that you have known what we are, you will not let us go. And we will never escape. Now I return the money you gave me.
(puts the money before Kohbeh)

Benten: Now take us to the police. We are ready to be arrested.

Nangoh: You shall soon know our ability. Say, boy bring me a cup of tea!

Chota: Well. (offers tea)

Nangoh: This smells of something burnt. I cannot drink such tea. (takes the cup and throws it at Chota.)

Chota: Ah! (gets surprised and avoids)

Benten: Now the matter has been settled. Before it grows late you had better seize us and take us to the police. If we are put into prison this time, we shall never cast out of it. But, Mr. Hayato, you are very kind to us. I will surely visit you even if I get beheaded.

Nangoh: Don't say such a regretful thing. You would be regarded as if you were fearful of death.

Saemon: Well, you have iron nerves. Though you have been perceived your true colours, you have the audacity to request us to take you to the police far from returning crestfallen. I would not keep you alive if the shop were not put to trouble.

Benten: Then do you intend to kill us if they are not troubled? Well, we are ready to be killed. It is my cherished desire.

Nangoh: Well, indeed! We are destined to the gallows after all. It would be a glorious death for us to be killed here by you.

The two: Now kill us quickly!

(The two approach Daemon. Daemon straighten himself.)

Daemon: Well. I will, if you wish.

(about to rise up with his sword. Kohbeh and Sohnosuke stop him)

Kohbeh: Wait a moment, please. If you ~~kill~~ them, it may bring you trouble ~~setting aside~~ our shop.

Sohnosuke: You must be enraged, I suppose but they are not fellows to deal with!

Daemon: So I have been patient, but how detestable they are!

Kohbeh: But please spare him for my sake.

Daemon: Well, I may. Of course I don't like to aggravate the matter.

Kohbeh: Then do you accept my proposal?

All: Thank you very much.

Benten: Now kill us quickly.

Nangoh: Or do you hand over to the police?

Benten: It has become late.

The two: Do quickly!

Kohbeh: It is now time to leave off! Please hush up the matter and go away recovering your temper.

The two: Never! We can never go!

Benten: I showed the cloven hoof and returned you the money. Therefore we are on even terms in this point, but how ~~do~~ you dispose of this wound on my forehead I received?

Kohbeh: Well, it is our fault. I will give you the smart money for it, so please go away amicably.

Benten: I may accept your proposal according to its nature.

Kohbeh: Then please accept this money though it is small. (Benten examines the money)

Benten: What! This is only ten yen. It would be a

great dishonour to us if we return receiving such a small amount of money because of having failed to swindle. I will return this to you.

Kohbeh: If you are displeased with it, I will see what I can do for you.

Benten: I never want such a small change.

Nangoh: Say, Benten! Now it has grown late. We had better go receiving that money.

Benten: What do you say? How could we return with such small money?

Nangoh: Something is better than nothing. As the master says, he will see what he can do for us. You had better leave remains to him.

Benten: Then we shall return receiving this money.

Kohbeh: Then will you listen to reason and.

Sohnosuke: Return quietly?

Benten: This time we shall return, but I hope to see more of you.

Nangoh: We shall often come here.

Yokuroh: It is enough.

All: You need not visit us any more. (Benten and Nangoh rise to their feet with their belongings)

Nangoh: Say, samurai, I am sorry to have disturbed you much.

Benten: I shall visit you later to say thanks to you.

Saemon: I shall be waiting for you.

The two: We will surely call on you to offer our thanks.
(The two go towards the gate)

Yokuroh: Never darken our door in future.

Benten: Shut up! Ta-ta.
(The two arrive at the stage passage)

Benten: This is an encumbrance.

Nangoh: Well, the same to me. Let's put together our belongings and carry them in turn whenever we see a cropped-headed man.

Benten: It's a good idea.

(Thereupon a massagist appears)

Benten: There, a massagist is coming. You shall have.
(hands the belongings over to Nangoh)

Nangoh: Oh, must I carry so soon?

(The massagist exits as if having forgotten something.)

Oh, he has turned back. Now you shall carry.

Benten: An accursed massagist! (begins to recite Shinnai with the belongings on his shoulder, when the massagist again appears.)

The massagist: Massagi!

(arrives at the stage)

Benten: There, he is coming again!

Nangoh: Let's drop the matter.

Benten: Hang it!

(They enter behind the curtain at the entrance of the passage to the stage reciting Shinnai in turn)

Daemon: How detestable are those swindlers!

Kohbeh: Well. But for you I would have been squeezed one hundred yen.

Sohnosuke: Thanks to you we could escape from difficulties.

Yokuroh: Even I can never thank you enough.

All: Thank you very much indeed.

Daemon: I hardly deserve your so many thanks.

Kohbeh: Anyhow, I should like to offer you a cup of sake as a token of our thanks to you. Please come to the inner room.

Daemon: Well.

Kohbeh: Come this way please.

Daemon: But I must be going now.

Kohbeh: (to Yokuroh) By the way, as for such difficulties it is you who are to blame. From today on you shall be relieved of your post as a clerk.

Yokuroh: It is too bad of you to say such a thing. I am sure there has been no fault on my part.

Kohbeh: You shall know later what fault you have made.

Yokuroh: Well/

Daemon: I don't know the circumstances, but so long as today's matter is concerned he is not to blame.

Kohbeh: I have many reasons to say so, but never mind to such a thing. Please come to the inner room.

Daemon: Thank you. But it has grown too late. I shall come to-morrow morning.

Sohnosuke: Well, but now it is supper time. I should like to serve you with a simple meal.

Daemon: Don't trouble yourself about such a

Kohbeh: I will not, but I have some other articles to show you. So please just come to the inner room.

Daemon: If you say so much it would be bad to refuse your proposal.

Sohnosuke: Any how we should like to offer you at least

a cup of sake as a token of our thanks.

Daemon: Then I will take you at your kind word.

(Daemon, Kohbeh and Sohnosuke enter the inner room)

Yokuroh: Now, I am afraid the serious gap I have caused in the finances of this shop might be discovered, and I might be driven out from this shop. How detestable those swindlers are! Well I will escape from here stealing much money before I am expelled.

(Thereupon in the inner room Chota raises a hub and cry. Yokuroh gets taken by surprise. Chota appears.)

Yokuroh: What has happened?

Chota: A cat stole the dried fish.

Yokuroh: Oh, I was surprised. (draws a long breath of relief and behaves as if striking Chota)

..... Dark Change

Second Scene: Inner room of Hamamatsuya.

A closet and a locker are seen on the main stage.

On the left side of the stage there is tea-coloured wall and a shop curtain is hanging. A storehouse is seen through the space of the curtain. On the right side Daemon is sitting and Kohbeh and Sohnosuke are treating him to a sumptuous repast.

Kohbeh: Being a bachelor's household, my son must fill your cup. Unmannerly as he is, make yourself at home.

Daemon: Thank you very much for your kind entertainment.

Sohnosuke: Wont you take one more cup?

Daemon: I have enjoyed enough.

Kohbeh: Don't stand at ceremoney.

Daemon: Thank you. But if I drunk more, my way home would be hard.

Kohbeh: Then I will take the last cup.

Daemon: Thank you very much for a capital dinner.
(Thereupon a shopman appears with dry goods wrapped in paper and tied with a paper cord.)

The shopman: Now, here are the articles you ordered me to bring.

Kohbeh: Well, clear the table.

The shopman: Certainly sir.

Kohbeh: Such as it is, I should like to present you of it.

Daemon: Master! What is this?

Kohbeh: It is only a small token of our thanks to you.

Daemon: I will take the will for the deed, but I must return these articles.

Kohbeh: Why do you not accept our present?

Daemon: Well, I concerned myself in today's matter not for the purpose of receiving such a regard, but because I could not remain indifferent about those detestable fellows who had attempted to squeeze you representing themselves as retainers of my lord.

(returns the articles towards Kohbeh)

Kohbeh: Well, I see. But I feel uneasy so long as you do not accept our present.

Daemon: Then to make you feel easy I will take you at your kind word. But I should like to receive what I

Kohbeh: I am very glad to hear cles do you wish?

Sohnosuke: Please tell it to us.

Daemon: Then I venture to say but I wish to receive your thanks in money.

Kohbeh: did not come under my notice.

(whispers something to Sohnosuke's ear)

Sohnosuke: Certainly sir.

(Sohnosuke is about to rise to his feet, when Daemon stops him)

Daemon: Say, master! You need not wrap the money. I will receive all the money you have together with .

Kohbeh: Eh! What do you say?

(Kohbeh gets surprised. Daemon rises to his feet and draws the sword.)

Daemon: Now I will receive money even by this sword.

The two: Eh!

(Daemon sticks the sword to the mat and straighten himself putting his foot on the clothes-box. Thereupon Nangoh, Benten and their followers appear.)

Nangoh: Well, we have succeeded.

Daemon: Did you fasten the doors back and front?

Benten: Yes, I have bolted them.

Nangoh: And tied all in the shop.

Kohbeh: Judging from your words, you seem to be the leader. You^r are perhaps -----

Daemon: Well, I am Nippon Daemon, the famous burglar all over the country.

Kohbeh:
Sohnosuke:) Eh!

Daemon: I was born in Mino Province. About seventeen years ago, I joined the ranks of the bandits and my name became one to conjure fear. At last I got watched by the authorities and ran away from the province. Then I knocked about the whole country infesting various provinces such as Echigo, Dewa, Mutsu etc. Now I am the leader of the famous gang of five robbers. To-day I used Benten as a decoy and successfully attempted to commit robbery. Now we demand you all the money you have.

Kohbeh: Since it has come to this, it cannot be helped I will offer you the money.

(Kohbeh opens the locker and takes out the

coffer with the money of one thousand yen.)

Now you may take this coffer.

Daemon: What! Only one thousand yen?

Nangoh: Your shop is well known and prosperous. We came here expecting at least three thousand yen.

Benten: Down with all the money you have!

Kohbeh: This is all we have now, for one of my shopmen has gone to Kyoto to purchase goods.

Daemon: If you will keep secret, you shall be killed.

(Daemon threatens Kohbeh with the sword)

Sohnosuke: Please just wait! For mercy's sake please spare my father's life. You may kill me instead of him. I lie under a great obligation to him.
(Sohnosuke appeals to Daemon's generosity, but the latter is quite indifferent. So he entreats Nangoh.)

Such being the case, will you please ask your master to spare my father's life.

(Nangoh is smoking without saying anything.)

Sohnosuke entreats Benten)

Then, for pity's sake please be kind enough to ask your master.

Benten: Shut up! (knocks down Sohnosuke)

Sohnosuke: Oh, you are too cold-hearted. It cannot be helped. Now kill me quickly instead of my father.
(Sohnosuke approaches Daemon.)

Daemon: You are admirable. Well, you shall be killed first.

Kohbeh: Just wait please, I lie under as much obligation

to my son as he does to me. I can not bear pain seeing him killed before me. I hear you are full of chivalry. Please listen to me.

When I was over thirty years old, I had not yet a child. I offered up prayers at the Hatsuseji Temple and fortunately had a child. On September 17th of seventeen years ago, my wife and I visited the temple to express our thanks, when a scuffle happened. People fled hither and thither taken by surprise, while she lost my child by accident and we got at a loss. Suddenly we saw a baby crying and brought it to our house thinking that it was my child. Later we noticed that it was not mine, and searched for the parents far and near in vain. So we have brought it up till today as my son, while my true son is missing still Sohnosuke's true parents must be anxiously in search for him and we may meet them at any moment. In that case, how could I justify myself if we let you kill Sohnosuke for money? We may earn money tomorrow even if we ~~lose~~ lose it today. But we can never recall a lost life. You may take all the money we have. For mercy's sake please spare Sohnosuke's life.

(Daemon seems to recall something to hear it.)

Daemon: Well, I will spare him.

Nangoh:)
Benten:)
Instead of it, down with all the money you have.

Daemon: No, I will not receive the money, too.

Kohbeh: Why?

Daemon: Didn't you find a sleeve with the crest of ~~that~~ three tortoises in the clothes of the baby you found in that temple seventeen years ago?

Kohbeh: Yes, we found it and Sohnosuke has it with him.
Say, Sohnosuke show it to Mr. Daemon.

Sohnosuke: Well. (shows the sleeve.) I thought this was my true father's crest and I have been always carrying it about myself.

(Daemon takes off his own coat and shows Kohbeh a crest of three tortoises on it.)

Daemon: See this crest, Mr. Kohbeh.

Kohbeh: Oh, it is just the same as that of Sohnosuke.

Kohbeh: Oh, the two crests are absolutely identical.

Kohbeh: Then are you Sohnosuke's father?

Daemon: Yes, I am his true father, such as I am.

Sohnosuke: Eh, are you?

Kohbeh: Oh! You are father and son.

Daemon: Well. It is a great crime that I not only broke into your house, but also was about to kill you without knowing that you brought up my son till today for seventeen long years. What a great offender I am! Pardon me please. Now I remember. About that time I was as poor as a Church mouse and could not bring up my child, as my wife had been dead. At last I resolutely deserted ~~if~~ my child in the temple hoping that he would be found by a benevolent person. But I could not immediately go away

from the temple being unable to cut off my painful feeling, when you and your better half came and found my child. I escaped hurriedly in the confusion and was staying in Yedo for a while. In the meantime I came to join the ranks of burglars and since that time I have led a wandering life, but I have never forgotten my darling son.

Sohnosuke: Then were you my true father?

I am very glad to meet you.

Kohbeh: By the way, did you not take my child at that time?

Daemon: No, I did not. On that night as many people visited the temple, some one of them may have taken him somewhere. I am ready to make every effort to find out your son. Is there any evidence about him?

Kohbeh: There is no special one, but when I lost sight of my child he was carrying an amulet bag with a red piece of cloth on which I had written his name and the date of birth. It was April 20th of the First Year of Kwanbun, and his name is Kohkichi.

Daemon: Well it was just seventeen years ago. Then your son is the same age as my son.
(Hearing it Benten takes a red piece of cloth out of his amulet bag.)

Benten: Don't you recognize this?

Daemon: Oh, it is just what I mean.

Sohnosuke: Then aren't you ----- ?

Benten: Yes, I am Kohkichi.

All: Oh!

Kohbeh: Oh, you are my son!

Benten: Father! I am ashamed indeed!

Kohbeh: And where have you been living till today?

Nangoh: I will tell instead of him.

Truly speaking it was my father, a fisherman, who found Kohkichi on that night. I was the only son of my father and he wished to bring up ^a Kohkichi as my brother. When he was twelve years old he was sent to service in a temple, by the request of the priest.

Benten: But I could not put up with the strict service and soon ran away from the temple. Though I went wrong being infected with Rikimaru, my own nature is responsible for the consequences. It is no use to get angry with others: it is all my own doing. I am destined to the gallows after all. I am afraid I may give you much grief, but please resign yourself to fate and pardon me.

Kohbeh: Don't say such a thing. You are my son all the same whatever you may be.

Daemon: I broke into the shop where my dear son had been brought up with much kindness.

Benten: Little expecting such a result.

Nangoh: We attempted to commit a wicked thing.

Sohnosuke: And I was about to lose my life, but ---

Kohbeh: On account of my having revealed my past to
beg your pardon.

Daemon: Father and son who had long been separated
from each other.

Benten: Could at last meet again.

Nangoh: And moreover today is the seventeenth of the
month.

Sohnosuke: The withered tree blossoms again.

Kohbeh: It is divine will that has brought us thus
together.

Daemon: Well.

All: Indeed!

Kohbeh: I am extremely glad to know that we are related
to one another. I will make you a present of
this money that you might reform and start
a new life.

Daemon: Thank you very much for your kind intention,
but I have a large following of over one thousand
me and we are destined to be under Heaven's
vengeance after all.

Benten: I hope that you will say prayers for us when
you hear that we have been executed.

Kohbeh: Then as long as you are living you are -----

Nangoh: Well we shall have to remain as we are now.

Daemon: How unlucky we are!

All: Indeed!

(Daemon's subordinate Sanji appears)

Sanji: Now we must escape from here quickly.

Daemon: What!

Sanji: As some one in the shop appealed to the police,
raiding constables will soon be here.

Kohbeh: Who did appeal?

Saji: Perhaps he is the clerk, Yokurch, I suppose.

Sohnosuke: Oh, that fellow! (looks at Sanji)
Oh, you are our customer! Then you are also---

Daemon: Yes, he is one of my subordinates.

Sohnosuke: By the way, now you may take the five wadded
silk garments you ordered the other day.
(takes them out of the clothes-box)

Daemon: Well. Then five of us together may wear res-
pectively those garments in case of need.

Nangoh: Indeed it is in the very nick of time.

Benten: Well, together with Akaboshi Tadanobu.

Daemon: Well five of us together.

Nangoh: Will wipe the constables out.

Benten: And let's be safe from pursuit.

The three: Well.
(Thereupon the sound of a drum comes to be
heard.)

Kohbeh: Oh, that drum must be ---

Daemon: Well, they are going to arrest us, I suppose.
(He straightens himself, when a cry of searching
for a lost child is heard.)

Sanji: What! A stray child.

Benten: For-tunately, they are not detectives, I suppose.

Nangoh: Then we must go quickly before we give the
shop trouble.
(The burglars are about to rise, when the shop-
man Tasuke raises a hue and cry. Nangoh in-

stantly seizes him)

Daemon: Then we must go, Mr. Kohbeh.

Kohbeh: Mr. Daemon.

Sohnosuke: I hope you will go in safe.

Benten: Good-bye. (All glance at one another.)

Kohbeh: Like a cuckoo in the nest of nightingales.

Daemon: You are my son's foster father.

§ Nangoh: So you are under great obligation to the master.

Sohbeh: But unfortunately.

Benten: I am destined to be arrested sooner or later.

Daemon: Indeed love of children is an eternal encumbrance.

..... Dark Change

Third Scene: Bank of Naruse River, near Kamakura.

Standing cherry-trees are seen on the bank and the waves are heard dashing against the shore.

A large number of men appear calling the name of the missing child.

The men: Santaroh! Santaroh!

A: Oh, it has begun to rain in small drops. I am afraid it may become a heavy rain.

B: Now that we cannot find him out hereabouts ---

C: He may have gone towards Rokuura.

D: Then let's go there.

All: Santaroh! Santaroh!

(They exit. Thereupon a ditty begins to samisen accompaniment.)

The ditty: A white sur-fine is rolling upon the beach and a distant boat-song is being heard. The row of dark green pine trees look very beautiful.

(Thereupon Benten-kozo appears on the passage stage.)

The ditty: Birds are blying home to roast in a flock.---
(Tadanobu Rihei appears wearing swords long and short)

The ditty: Now the night is falling and a misty moon has appeared on the horizon.
(Akaboshi Juza appears.)

The ditty: A dinstant thunder comes to be heard thro
the blowing wind.

(Nangoh Rikimaru appears.)

The ditty: Now here are all the five burglars, well-known
all over the country.

(Nippon Daemon appears.)

Benten: Now we have managed escaped here after having
crossed the mountain.

Tadanobu: But now it has become dark, and the bell is
heard telling the evening time.

Akaboshi: Well, we had better put out to see before day-
break.

Nangoh: So long as we are on the sea over the cape of
Misaki ---

Daemon: We shall be beyond the reach of pursuit.

Benten: But security is the greatest enemy.

Tadanobu: Well, indeed!

Akaboshi: When the pursuers approach us ---

Nangoh: We will mow down the enemy right and left and---

Daemon: If we are more than a match for them, we shall
be ready to be arrested.

The five: Well.

(The burglars arrive at the main stage, when a
large number of constables make their appearance
calling the name of the lost child.)

Constable A: You are now under arrest!

All the constables: Now the time has come when you have
to pay the debt of nature!

Daemon: Well I see. You must have been lying in wait
here to arrest us.

The burglars: Indeed!

Constable B: Well we have made an ambush for you pretending to be in search for a lost child.

Daemon: Now that things have come to this we will never escape. We are ready to be arrest giving our names respectively.

The burglars: Well.

Constable A: Well, you are admirable.

Daemon: Now listen to me. I was born in Hamamatsu. I lost my parents when I was fourteen years old and soon joined a gang of bandits. I have been infesting various provinces all over the country, but I have never committed any unhuman thing. I have always been compassionate to the poor and came to be called, "The chivalrous robber". Now I am forty years old and I have lived the greater part of life. My end has come at last. Listen to me! I am the leader of the famous five burglars, Nippon Daemon.

Benten: Now listen to me. Born in Enoshima Island, I am an ex-page of Iwamoto Temple. I used to swindle money disguised as a girl utilizing my handsome appearance. I have got iron nerves through various wicked things, and was put into prison many times. But on all such occasions I could succeed to escape from prison and have led a wandering life till today, Benten-kozo Kikunosuke is my name!

Tadanobu: And then you shall know. I was born in Yedo.

From my childhood I was light-fingered, and fell into evil courses running away from home. I started for a travel towards west committing theft in many places I broke into temples and mansions and fled from justice. Soon I returned to Yedo and became a member of the five burglars. Tadanobu Rihei is my name!

Akaboshi: Now listen to me! Once I was waiting on a lord as a page, and killed many men for my master's sake. I was aleptomaniac and made every effort to get out of the bad habit in vain. At last I was dismissed on account of having lost my master's name and began to lapse in conduct. I did various wicked things utilizing my handsome appearance. But Heaven's vengeance is slow but sure, and the time has come for me to pay the debt of nature.

Nangoh: And listen to me. I was born as the son of a fisherman. I led my former life holding communication with high sea among many roughs. I used to join gambling in main ships, and was often involved in bloody quarrels, ~~was killed~~ Soon I came to fall into far more evil courses and wounded or killed others committing one crime after another. However ill news runs fast and I've resigned myself to my fate, but I will never ask for my life, I am ready to be under gallows. Nangoh Rikimaru is my name.

Daemon: As you hear, we are the famous five burglars.

Benten: Well-known all over the country.

Akaboshi: We are the leaders of more than one thousand burglars.

Nangoh: We have iron nerves and make nothing of death.

Daemon: It would be a great honour for you to arrest us.

The five: Now come on!

The constables: Well.

(The sound of waves becomes louder. The constables surround the burglars and attack them. The burglars square themselves to fight and a severe scuffle begins.

The burglars drive the constables right and left.

Juza and Rihei stand on the left side. Rikamaru and Benten on the right and Daemon in the middle.)

..... The curtain